The Shadow of the Sheltering Pines

A New Romance of the Storm Country

By GRACE MILLER WHITE

CHAPTER XIV.

—14—

A Will Is Changed.

The two years that had passed since Tony Devon had entered the Pendlehaven home, the greater part of which she had spent in school, had brought about many changes. Paul Pendlehaven had taken his place among the world's workers, but this does not say that he did not still long for the child who had gone from his life eighteen years before.

Mrs. Curtis was no nearer giving Cousin John to Katherine as a father than she ever had been, and Ithaca had caught no sight of Reginald Brown since he had fled from it with the notion that he might follow Uriah Devon behind the prison bars. Philip had carried on his wonderful work, living in the joyous letters he received from Tony and spending his spare time in answering them.

One morning Tony came to Paul Pendlehaven, smiling and blushingly girlish, and he motioned her to a little stool at his feet.

"Darling," he began in a moved tone, "I sent for you because I've come to perhaps the most important decision of my whole life."

Tony glanced up at him wonderingly. He appeared solemnly sober and looked as if he hadn't slept.

"If it affects me, Cousin Paul, it can't be greater than the one you made over two years ago when you took poor little me into your home," she asserted.

His hand fell lovingly upon her curly head as though in benediction.

They both lapsed into a long silence, the girl's dreamy eyes fixed on space, and the man gazing at her shining head.

"Tony," he ejaculated at length. There was something in his voice as he pronounced her name that dispelled her revery instantly.

"Yes," she breathed. "Yes, what is it?"

Pendlehaven cleared his throat.

"I would never have believed that anyone could have wormed her way into my heart as you have," he told her. "How would—how would you like me for your father?"

Tony tried to speak but, seeing he had something else to add, waited expectantly.

"Once, as you know," went on the doctor, "I had a little girl of my own, but the years have been so long and so many since she was taken away, I feel I shan't have her again in this world."

Tony's dark head dropped against his knee in silent sympathy.

"Could you think of me as your father, dear?" he said after an emotional silence.

"I'm not fit for that," sighed Tony. "No, no, not that. I come from people who are not your kind, Cousin Paul. You know that! Everybody does! Then I'm not so good as you think I am. First of all I haven't always told you the truth."

"So my brother told me," remarked Doctor Paul. "Long ago he took me into his confidence about the poison in my medicine. I've watched you for two years, Tony, and it seems to me that I know every secret of your soul. I'm sure you love me, dear child. I'm going to adopt you legally for my daughter. After this I'm your father, and I give warning to my Captain MacCauley that if he tries to take you from me, he's going to have some fight on his hands. From now on, I'm not Cousin Paul. I am—what?"

"My father," gulped Tony. "It seems as if I couldn't stand so much happiness. And if you're my father, that makes Cousin John—"

"Your uncle," laughed a voice from the door. "So Paul has told you, has he, little girl? Well, Tony, you wouldn't have slept a wink one night if you'd heard our argument about you. We spent several hours wrangling which of us should adopt you. I said I should because I saw you first, and Paul—"

"Has the prior right because you saved me, Tony," interrupted Paul. "Now I think the family had better know of our changed arrangements."

Paul Pendlehaven acted as spokesman when Mrs. Curtis and her daughter, Katherine, had been summoned to the library. He told them very gravely that as his will now stood, his brother, John, and his cousin, Sarah, were the beneficiaries of it. Mrs. Curtis smiled at him and arranged the lace ruffles around her neck.

"You've always been most generous, Paul dear," she simpered.

"But now," went on the doctor, paying no heed to the lady's remark, "our household's going to have a mistress."

Katherine lifted her chin from the palm of her hand, and Mrs. Curtis straightened up. Were her ambitions going to be realized after all? Was it Paul who was going to put her in her rightful place? The smile broadened on her lips, and she sank back with a happy sigh. She had to admit Cousin Paul looked very handsome, yes, even handsomer than Cousin John. What a fool she had been not to have caught him sooner.

"The woman you put at the head of your home will be most fortunate and happy, dear Paul," she murmured.

"I hope so," returned Pendlehaven, and Doctor John pulled at the corners of his mouth to keep back a malicious grin.

"I'm going to adopt Tony Devon—" Doctor Paul had only time enough to make this statement when Mrs. Curtis jumped to her feet.

"You couldn't do that!" she cried. "That would be wicked, Paul, absolutely wicked! Oh God, don't do that!"

Without heeding in the slightest his cousin's bitter ejaculation, Paul Pendlehaven picked up a box that lay at his elbow. With much ceremony he opened it and took out an exquisite pearl necklace.

"I do not need to remind any of you," he said, turning his eyes from his brother to his two white-faced cousins, "that these belonged to my dear wife. I have always considered them the property of her daughter too. That is the reason, Katherine, why I've always refused your request to wear them. But now I have a daughter." He turned smiling eyes upon Tonnibel. "I shall allow her to wear them whenever she wishes, and if—if her lost sister isn't found, then they are hers—hers forever."

A long hissing breath broke from Sarah Curtis, and a gasp came from Katherine.

"I couldn't wear them," Tony got out at length, "I simply couldn't."

"Not to please me, your father, Tonnibel?" demanded Paul, almost brusquely.

"And me, your new uncle?" laughed Doctor John. "Why, honey, little girl," he reached out and took Tonnibel's hand, "don't look as if you'd lost your last friend!"

Then Paul Pendlehaven drew Tonnibel Devon to his side, and, when he had clasped the jewels around her neck, he lifted her face and kissed her.

"There, little daughter!" His voice choked with emotion, but he conquered his feelings and went on, "they're very lovely, very precious, Tony, doubly so because you're wearing them."

"Oh," she exulted, "how happy I am! . . . It isn't the pearls, though they're simply great, but it's that I have some real people." She turned a flushed and radiant face to each man. "Somebody that's my very own. My mother's dead, and my father—"

"Is in prison," snapped Mrs. Curtis, vindictively. "I'm wondering what he'll say to all this when he comes home."

"His opinion won't make any difference to us," Paul Pendlehaven stated coolly. "He has forfeited every right to any claim on Tony."

"Hideous!" exclaimed Mrs. Curtis, and "Well, I never," dropped from Katherine.

"And," went on Doctor Paul, relentlessly, for he knew the barbs that were being thrust into the souls of his two cousins, "I'm going to change my will in favor of my new daughter here—"

"And I mine in favor of our young Salvation Army captain who is going to marry my new niece," chuckled Doctor John. "I guess that's all we have to say, Paul."

In silence Katherine and Mrs. Curtis faded from the room, carrying with them bitter humiliation and nursing outraged feelings.

"It's all your fault, mamma," scolded Katherine, bursting into tears when they were in the seclusion of their own apartments. "You've whined and wept yourself right out of Cousin John's life, that's what you've done. God, how I hated that girl when I saw Caroline's pearls around her neck!"

"What are you doing now?" thrust back her mother. "Aren't you crying as if your heart would break? I tell you tears—"

"Oh Lordy, tears! What good do they do?" came sharply. "Here we are without a future, without a home! That interloper will see we go the moment Paul gets out those papers! Oh, what shall we do?"

"I wish that man—her father, I mean—was out of jail," mused Mrs. Curtis. "I really believe he could do something, Katie. Perhaps, Reggie—"

Katherine wiped her eyes with a sudden movement.

"Mamma, why don't you send for Reggie?" she questioned. "Now, listen to me. Reggie confided in me before he left that he really was fond of that girl, and if— Oh, mamma, I've thought of a wonderful thing. Send for Reggie, shove the girl under his nose every minute. Let him cut Philip out—"

"And perhaps have my son marry that thing," objected the mother curtly.

"That thing, as you please to call Tony Devon, is one of the prettiest and richest young women in this county." Katherine snapped back. "She's heiress to the Pendlehavens, and engaged to be married to a man who owns half the town. Thing, eh? Well, I think she's a little higher up in the world at this moment than my half-brother, Reggie, if you want my opinion."

That night an urgent message from the frantic mother traveled by wire to Reginald Curtis, summoning him home.

CHAPTER XV.

The Last Card.

One day some weeks later, Reginald Brown walked rapidly along the boulevard past the row of squatter shacks. He had received word that Uriah Devon, released from prison, would anchor the Dirty Mary near the Hoghole in her accustomed place.

Devon was on deck when Brown ran up the gangplank.

"So you came, old top," was Uriah's greeting. "It's good you did; I want to know what's doin'."

A woman came to the door of the cabin and peered out. When she saw the newcomer, she scowled and went back.

"I thought you said she was dead," commented Reggie, with a wag of his head toward the spot where the woman had stood.

"Well, she ain't! Worse luck!" growled Uriah. "I told that to the kid to make her feel bad. Ede was willing to be dead for a while, anyhow. What's the news of Tony?"

"Oh, she's a lady now," answered Reggie, sarcastically. "The Pendlehavens have sent her to school ever since you went away. My mother tells me Paul Pendlehaven's going to adopt her. And what do you think else?" he demanded.

"I dunno," grunted the other. "Good God! Don't sit there tearin' me to pieces with curiosity. Fire ahead, and tell me."

"She's copped Phil MacCauley," returned Reginald; "Ithaca's snob of a Salvation Army captain, the fellow who threw me in the lake that day, and he's as rich as the Pendlehavens put together."

"Well, he won't get 'er," asserted Uriah, sharply. "I've told you the girl's rich too. Her father's got money to burn."

"A lot of good that'll do you, Ry," sneered Reggie. "She wouldn't look at the likes of you and Edith. You aren't in her class any more."

"Ain't I so?" queried Devon, grouchily. "I reckon her hide ain't no tougher nor thicker'n it used to be. I'll thump h—ll out of 'er once or twice; I'll show 'er what class she's in."

"You'll have to catch her before you beat her, won't you, Ry?" Reggie inquired tauntingly. "How're you going to get your hands on her? Tell me that, will you?"

"Yep, Mr. Mealy-mouth, I will," thrust back Devon. "We got to steal 'er." He clenched his heavy fist and swung it menacingly and suggestively. "What's left of 'er when I'm done with 'er 'll marry you all right. That over, I'll tell 'er who she is, providin' you promise to halve up the stuff with me."

"I did promise you once, didn't I?" asked Reggie, sulkily. "Of course, I will, but what's the use of dreaming? The Pendlehavens're too much for us. Now that Paul's well, he and John are a big team, and they worship the ground that girl walks on. You're biting off more'n you can chew, Ry. You aren't any too strong, you know. A prison record doesn't help any."

Uriah grunted and followed a ring of smoke with his frowning eyes.

"She's my girl," he said at length, "and I'm goin' to have 'er."

"I thought you said she wasn't," put in Reggie, suspiciously.

"Well, she don't know that, does she?" Devon retorted. "Nobody knows but you and Ede, besides me."

"She's a beauty," sighed Reggie, his voice lowered to a growl. "I'd marry her if she didn't have a cent."

"You don't need to make any such sacrifice, old horse," said Devon. "Your eyes will bung out of your head when you hear her name."

Reginald argued he should know who the girl was before he married her, but Uriah wouldn't give up his secret. Indeed, he unfolded to the prospective husband how he planned to capture Tonnibel, and sent Reggie away convinced, red hot to perform his part in the scheme. At last, he was to have the girl he wanted and money too.

The next morning Reggie approached his mother with an air of secrecy.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Insects Not Prohibitionists.

There are no prohibitionists among the insects, says a correspondent. Hundreds of wasps were recently observed among the fir trees of Keston lake crawling eagery over spindles and sucking at drops of turpentine which form at this time of year. A vast humming came from the trees, reminiscent of the midsummer ring over the heated hay fields. Large flies and blue-bottles were also seen. In many cases the insects consumed so much of the firewater that they fell to the ground in a drunken stupor, or clung hazardly to the trees. The wolf-spider chasing its prey through the grass like a dog was having a rich harvest. Other insects came to the bacchanalian repast. A species of aphis was much in evidence and also its keeper, the ant, busy milking it of its gathered liquor.

Gypsying By Automobile

By John Dickinson Sherman

ASSIGNING CAMP SITES IN SEQUOIA NATIONAL PARK

EVERYBODY and his wife and kids are going motor-gypsying this summer. Thousands are already on their way, and the rest are getting ready to start. By midsummer the scenic West will be alive with motorists. It's a good guess that half of them will start out with a camping equipment and a solemn vow to camp by the roadside every single night. Some of them will keep the vow they swore, but many will fall by the wayside—instead of camp—and the Johnny-on-the-spot hotel will get their hard-earned dollars. Others of the gypsies will run on a 50-50 schedule—camp when the camping is good, and the hotel for them at other times.

Of course the first hundred or so miles are the hardest on Middle West gypsies, for the nearer they get to the Rockies the more numerous and pretentious are the auto-camps. Pretty soon they get into a country where every self-respecting community offers a really comfortable camp, with running water, wood, fireplaces, electric lights an' everythin'.

While there will be motor-gypsying all over the land, the rush will undoubtedly be to the national parks of the Rockies and beyond. The fame of the "Delectable Mountains" is abroad in the land. To the people of the sun-baked Middle West the thought of a land where they will sleep under blankets is impelling. And actually to need a sweater morning and evenings! And trout streams that are ice-cold! And everlasting snow in sight on the mountain-slopes! Just the thought of these things along about the middle of July is enough to pack 'em in the old flivver and start 'em due west on the Lincoln highway or some other transcontinental road.

The folks up North who see snow every winter haven't the faintest idea of what snow in midsummer means to folks down South who never see it. Why, the sight of it is worth the whole trip from Louisiana or Texas. One August day at the foot of Longs Peak in Rocky Mountain National park a car carrying a Texas license came along with four husky young Texans in it. One jumped out and came up to my tent.

He asked me politely if I could tell him what was that white patch up on the mountain, pointing to the everlasting snow on the farther side of Boulderfield, about a thousand feet below the summit. I told him. "How come?" he wanted to know. I explained. Could anybody get to it? I said he could walk right to it and roll in it. He asked how far it was. I told him that it was just about five miles, with a climb of 4,000 feet, and gave him details of the trail. Then he let out a yell—a Texas yell—and dashed back to the flivver. Then followed an excited confab, all four talking at once. Then away went the flivver, full speed ahead for the slope of Longs—snowbank or bust!

Fellows like that should start a little earlier to get around to the winter sports and ski tournaments in Mount Rainier along about the Fourth of July!

This motor-gypsying is no guesswork. The official figures of national park attendance show more than a million visitors last summer, and this season the figures most likely will run to a million and a quarter. Of these about 70 per cent travel in their own cars. And a good big percentage are fixed for camping. The National Park service says in its 1920 annual report:

"Final travel figures, reaching a total of 1,058,455 visitors, show a healthy and substantial growth of American tourist travel in America. This travel has now reached a proportion where it must be seriously considered as an economic factor in our national life. Surely travel of this proportion is not born of merely a restlessness on the part of our fellow citizens to be going somewhere just for the going, but denotes a deeper feeling, pride of country, a desire to see and know their land and to make that use of their national parks for which these playgrounds were created.

"Just as the rail lines brought people to the parks from every state in the Union and from many foreign countries, so were motorists recorded traveling in private cars from every state and from Canada and Mexico. More than half of these carried their own supplies and camp equipment and enjoyed their playgrounds in their own way."

The plain truth of the matter is—whisper it!—that the camping-out folks at the peak of the season often fared better than the stay-at-a-hotel folks, for the simple reason that things got decidedly jammed up in August at several of the principal parks.

Rocky Mountain, for example, had 240,000 visitors—it's the nearest to the travel and population center—and 50,000 autos. And hundreds were turned away for lack of hotel accommodations. Of course the motor-gypsies weren't turned away; there's always room for them in its 400 square miles. This year there'll be more hotel accommodations—and likewise bigger auto camps, as in all the principal national parks.

This motor-gypsying is increasing like an unfought forest fire. And why not? It appeals so many ways.

In the first place, it's cheap. I have run across many an outfit that were having the time of their lives on mighty little money. One old farmer from Nebraska put his case in a nutshell thus:

"Here we are—me and my wife and our five children. I've been wanting for years to show 'em this country, but couldn't stand the expense. Now I've got a car, and it's all right. Traveling this way won't cost much more than staying at home. And a good time—well, say."

But don't fool yourself into thinking that it's a question of mere dollars and cents with all the gypsies. You'll see the most expensive cars as well as flivvers. And in them will be people who don't have to count their dollars. The idea, you see, is based upon one of the oldest and fundamental instincts of the race—the call of the open road.

"For joy is the law of the open road,
And glad are its ways, its laughter free;
Away with your town-wrought weary load,
Come hit the trail with me!"

And in this matter of gypsying, we've got the gypsy beat to a frazzle. The mileage that can be covered is limited only by the length of vacation time. I know of one family last summer that started from Philadelphia June 12 and returned September 11. They visited Rocky Mountain. They climbed Pike's Peak. They saw the petrified forest on the way to Los Angeles over the Santa Fe trail. From San Francisco they went to the Yosemite, and thence back home over the Lincoln highway—just about 10,000 miles, camping always, except when conditions were too unfavorable.

Conditions in this year of 1921 and the trend of public opinion warrant the prediction that it will be only a few years before an American motor-gypsy will be able to start at the Atlantic coast and make the round trip to the Pacific on good roads and camping by the roadside in comfort on public ground—national, state, county, municipal and local parks. That is the keynote of the campaign begun last summer at the national conference on parks at Des Moines.

It is a shame to talk about making money in connection with motor-gypsying and trout streams and snow-clad peaks, but here goes: Suppose every one of these 1,000,000 gypsies who visited the national parks scattered an average of $100 along his route. That means 100,000,000 American dollars kept at home and put in circulation and business for all sorts of people along the road. Do a little figuring for yourself along this line, guessing at the number of motor-gypsies there were in addition to those who visited the national parks.

The best thing about all is that the people are beginning to get it through their heads that the national parks belong to them. And they are beginning to use them. And maybe it isn't a good thing for the people and country! Maybe it doesn't make for acquaintance and mutual respect and democracy!

I saw in the Big Thompson canyon in Rocky Mountain National park a bunch of several cars—different makes from several different sections of the country and carrying several different kinds of families. Well, the women were getting lunch ready and the children were playing together and the men were whipping the Big Thompson close by for trout. Enough said.

This 1921 civilization of ours is pretty complex—maybe too complex to be "sane, safe and sober." Nature is about the best antidote for a good many of its ills. And gypsying by automobile isn't the worst way in the world to get fairly close to nature.

BREAKING THE ICE.

There is a story that when Peter the Great introduced the social reforms in Russia, in an effort to bring his country abreast of western Europe, the Russian women were so averse to the immodest French dances that he caused ardent spirits to be served "straight," in wooden spoons, to every young woman at the ball before the beginning of the dance. To break the ice of Russian reserve more thoroughly he issued a ukase that the partners should kiss after taking the positions of dancers and before beginning their steps.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Newlyweds.

My husband and I having been married just a short time, arrived in New York and went to one of the best-known hotels. My husband registered and we went up to our room. I said, "Oh, John, I hope you didn't register 'and wife.' I hate that. It sounds as if a woman were just an appendage. I meant to tell you to be sure and write 'Mr. and Mrs.'"

The expression on John's face was almost tragic, so I hastened to assure him that it wasn't that serious.

"But it is serious. What do you suppose I've done? I registered 'John Brooks and Mary Allen.'"

Just then there was a loud knock at the door. It was the house detective. Of course everything was explained all right, but it certainly was embarrassing.—Chicago Tribune.